

## Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

A was playing in a foursome qualifying for a cup, medal score to count; but was also playing a foursome match game at the same time. On the 15th hole A lost his ball in the rough. He then dropped a ball taking no penalty and played three or four strokes getting out of the rough towards the green. A then realized that he was qualifying medal play and went back to the tee and played the hole over, taking a penalty of stroke and distance. The other players contend that under local rules governing match play A could drop a ball without penalty but that after he had played the ball he could not go back to the tee and play the hole over for his medal score, but was disqualified. A then claimed the strokes should be counted as practice strokes. The other players claim that there is a rule against practice shots being played towards a green during a match and also that A was disqualified after playing two or more shots with the second ball.

Decision.—Rule 22 states definitely and specifically the conditions covering Lost Ball. A did not comply with the Rules of Golf and therefore he is disqualified. There is no possible justification in his claim that the strokes should be counted as practice strokes. The Rules Committee wishes to point out that the Local Rule of your club, allowing the player to drop in Match Play when the ball is lost, without penalty, is entirely contrary to the rules as well as the spirit of the game of golf. The question as to the penalty of Lost Ball has been discussed many times and in equity to the players, Rule 22 has been decided to cover the point thoroughly and we see no occasion for having a Local Rule that is in violation of this Rule

A and B are playing C and D in a four-ball match. A is in a sand trap just off the putting green but within twenty yards of the cup. C's ball, his opponent, is on the putting green but farther away from the cup than that of A, but C's ball is within twenty yards of the cup. Which should play first A or C? A claims that the man farthest from the hole should play first whenever he is in any kind of a match. Is he right or wrong?

Decision.—Rule 7 states "that the ball farthest from the hole shall be played first"; therefore C, being farther away from the cup than A must play first in any kind of a match. The exception to this is Rule 1 under Rules for Three Ball, Best Ball and Four Ball Matches. In this case, if any ball lie in such a position as to interfere with the player, he may ask the owner of this ball to either lift or putt at the option of the owner.

A, B, C, D, are playing a match. A teed his ball and took a swing that differed in no way from his accustomed swing. His club hit the ball on the toe and knocked it some ten or twenty feet at right angles off the tee. A then stated the swing was a practice swing, thereupon the other members of the foursome told him to retrieve his ball and take his drive from the tee without penalty. B then stated that, according to the rules, A had a right to do so. C demurred, claiming he did so entirely at the sufferance and with the permission of the foursome and not by any right or privilege contained within the rules. Had A the right to retee his ball without penalty?

Decision.—The entire point in this question is whether A's intent

was to make a stroke when he knocked the ball off the tee. A player must know if he means to play a shot or not, and there is nothing in the rules to prove the intent; it is a question of fact that the player must decide. See definition 13 and Rule 2, paragraph 1. One of the fundamentals of golf is that no player wilfully takes an unfair advantage of his opponent.

During a golf match when one of the players' ball is lost is it permissible for anyone in the gallery to assist in finding the ball?

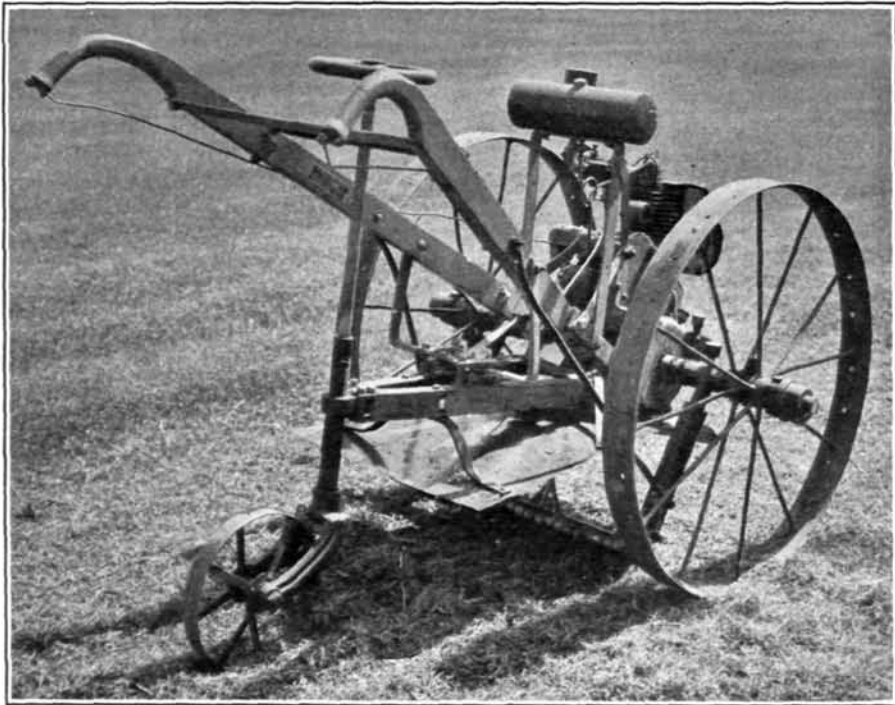
Decision.—There is no rule prohibiting anyone in the gallery to assist the players in finding golf balls.

What penalty is incurred by a caddie getting into a trap with the player? This rule has come up for ruling in several matches and no one seems to be positive on it.

Decision.—There is no rule in the game of golf that penalizes a player for allowing his caddie to get in the trap with him. The practice should not be allowed as the caddie might in some way improve the lie of the ball or give the player information as to the consistency of the soil, which would be in violation of Rule 25.

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